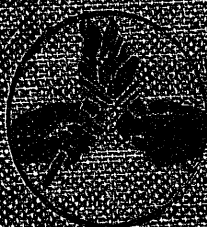


DEMOCRACY and THE CHURCH

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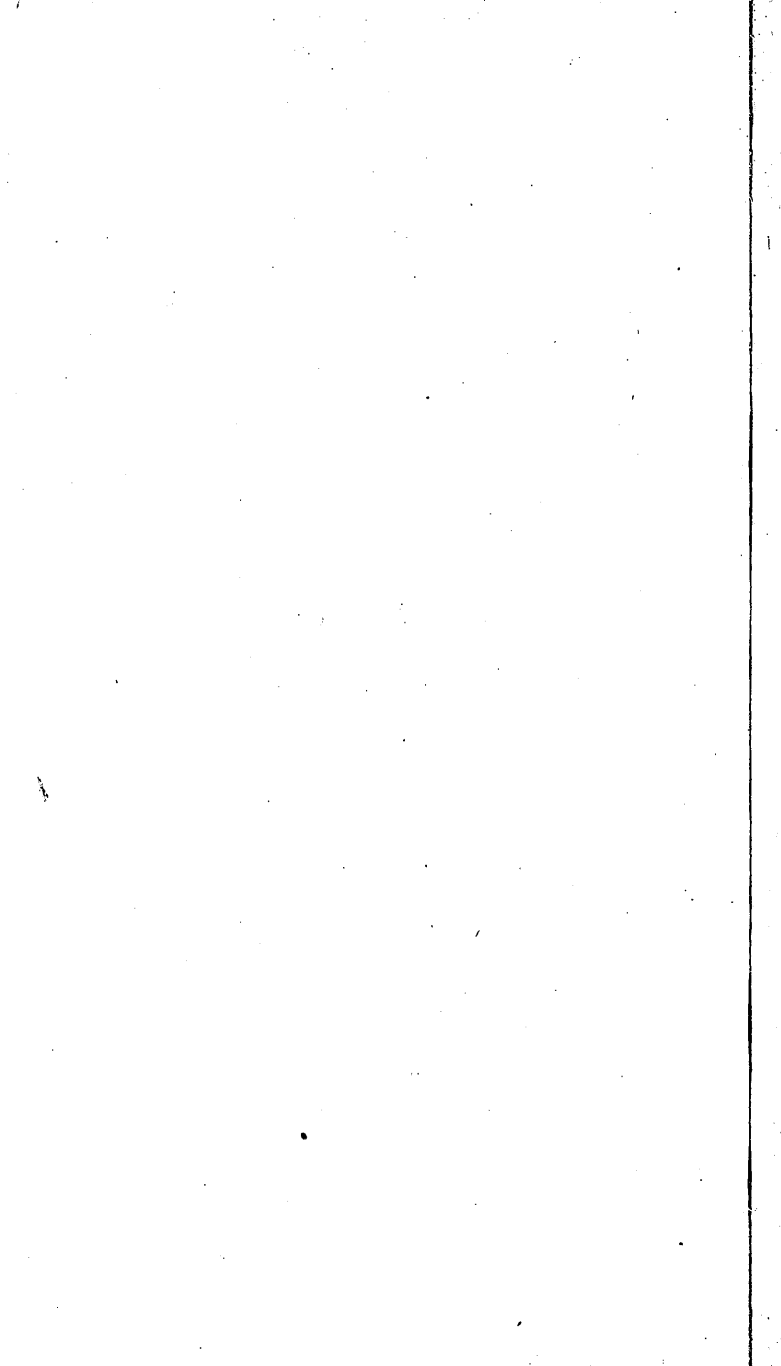
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Democracy and the Church



Democracy and the Church

One church
By
F. A. AGAR

Author of "Dead or 'Alive,'" "Help Those Women!" etc.



*Given by
Shailer Mathews*

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Preface

DEMOCRACY is paramount in the minds of the people of this generation. The spirit of democracy is like the star in the West which drew towards it the Wise Men of the East. The wise and good men of all the world are turning with courage and hope towards true democracy.

The need of the world for peace and justice, for progress and prosperity, can only be met as the principles of democracy govern nations and people. Therefore, other forms of government are giving place to democracy.

Herein the Church of Jesus Christ finds reward and encouragement, for true Christianity has ever been the opponent of autocracy and the exponent of democracy. The only hope for democratic principles to rule in the world is found in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

This study has been made for the purpose of assisting Christian democracy in making a self-examination which will enable it to occupy in the immediate future the place of influence and

power that must be filled by the great institution called the Church.

If democracy is to fill the world with hope, peace, justice, and progress, the Church of Jesus Christ must take her place of leadership and reveal to all men the powers and wonders produced within her fellowship by the fundamental spirit and governing principles of a Christian democracy.

The spirit and teachings of Jesus are in truth the aims and purposes of a true democracy. There is hope for democracy in the world in proportion as these animate and control the membership of His Church. No more, no less.

If this book helps inaugurate the great Christian democracy to achieve its purpose, the gratitude of the author will be shared by several of his friends who have been of great help in the preparation of the material herein contained.

F. A. A.

New York.

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I

THE IDEAL DEMOCRACY

DEMOCRACY is the battle-cry of the present day world. It is at once the hope and the desire and objective of all sane and normal peoples or nations.

A WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

To make the world safe for democracy the loftiest principles and greatest powers of each individual and nation must be invested in the work of preparing the world to receive it. Even with the best we have invested in this cause, it will fail unless to all human powers is added the divine power which lifts mankind out of itself and enables men to regard their neighbor from the Christian point of view.

We are our brother's keeper, but when God's view-point prevails we are also our brother's brother, and when this comes to pass the ideal democracy will rule safely in the world.

DEMOCRACY MADE SAFE FOR THE WORLD

It has also been well said that democracy must be made safe for the world. The truth of that

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statement was evidenced when the great Russian people broke the chains of autocracy and set up a form of democracy. But it was not a type of democratic government that was safe for the people who established it. It allowed another nation to take brutal advantage of a simple, peace-loving people and to put an iron ring of autocracy about the neck of that misguided people. An unsafe form of democracy supervened in place of the genuine, so well described by President Lincoln as a government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Only the religion of Jesus Christ incorporated with the principles of democratic government can make democracy safe for the world.

THE CHURCH AS THE IDEAL DEMOCRACY

The Church of Jesus Christ was instituted in the world upon the true principles of democracy. The organization was designed to meet the immediate personal needs growing out of human relationships with God and fellow men.

Beyond the Church, national governments had been projected. But the founder of the Church, though He was the Son of God and had at His disposal omnipotent powers, yet recognized human government for Himself and paid a tax to maintain it. Such governments depend upon

human relations rightly constituted and then righteously maintained. One of the purposes of His teachings was to establish right human relations and to maintain them in righteousness. His Church, therefore, should reveal the fruits of democracy, for if it cannot succeed in the Church, there is little hope for its success anywhere. The reason for this last statement is evident, when it is remembered that the Church of Jesus Christ is supposed to be composed of people who have given themselves up to the will and power of God, thus changing the controlling motives of their lives and actions. They are supposed to be seeking the unselfish path of service in Christ's name, and not their own selfish enjoyment and enrichment. If democracy cannot succeed in the Church with its self-selected class, it is logical and practical to conclude that it has no hope of success elsewhere. The Church of Jesus Christ should be the ideal democracy, the pattern for all other democracies concerned with human relations and government.

If this argument seems specious and ill-advised, it must be remembered that the Christian ideal is supposed to be all inclusive and should make its followers more competent and stronger for every phase of their life-work and contacts with fellow men.

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THERE ARE AUTOCRACIES IN RELIGION

We must not be blind to the fact that to-day there are religious organizations that are as autocratic as any that have ever marred the face of the world.

Christianity and the teachings of Christ are not always identical and the danger to-day is that some Christian groups in their intense zeal and close organization become autocratic in their dealings with their own members and with other organizations. To grow and acquire power at such a cost is to pay a terribly great price. It is worse than a calamity, for it hampers the progress both of Christianity and democracy in a world that needs both of them more than it needs either of them singly. The world cannot use any form of autocracy even when it comes in the guise of Christianity, nor can it long use democracy when it lacks Christianity, because in lacking the latter, it becomes untrue to the real principles of democracy.

SOME DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY

At this point it will be wise to define democracy. The dictionary gives the following definitions :

1. The political system in which govern-

ment is directly exercised or controlled by the people collectively.

2. A commonwealth in which the people as a whole legislate and choose executive and judicial officers, either directly or through elected representatives.
3. Political and legal equality, a state of society without class distinctions made or favored by law or custom.

FOUR DEFINITIONS OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY

In order to study the Church as a democracy, let us now turn those definitions into religious phraseology. They will then read like this:

1. The spiritual brotherhood in which government is directly exercised or controlled by the people collectively.
2. A brotherhood in which the people as a whole legislate and choose executive and ministering officers, either directly or through elected representatives.
3. Religious and fraternal equality, a state of spiritual life without racial or class distinction made or favored by law or custom.

No one of these definitions, however, seems to cover the actual needs of the case, so this additional one is presented.

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4. A Christian democracy is a brotherhood of the followers of Jesus Christ who have voluntarily associated themselves together in a spirit of fraternity and equality for the purpose of nurture, culture and the development of the same spirit of brotherhood throughout the world.

FOURTH DEFINITION APPLIED TO THE LOCAL CHURCH SHOULD PRODUCE DEFINITE RESULTS

Applying this definition to a local church would produce some definite results. An ideal democracy should result in —

Surrendered Individualism.

First of all it would provide for the voluntary surrender of the individualistic life and point of view. The principle of voluntarism is essential here.

Interdependent Relationship.

Its acceptance would cause the installation in the daily life of an interdependent relationship that would produce action of a marked sort. A great apostle expressed this result well when he said, "If to eat meat offend my brother I will eat no meat." Again it is expressed in the words, "We are members one of another." The in-

terdependent relationship once established would lead to the voluntary surrender of individual opportunities and powers for the purpose of doing good and providing safety and comfort to all others in the association. On the other hand, the individualistic life is selfish. It does not concern itself with the weak or less fortunate, but seeks ample scope for exploitation of others.

There are churches and people who claim the right of individualism. The right is granted to them without argument, but the practice of this privilege is impossible under present conditions. Any man or church is too dependent upon others for the various essentials of life to practice individualism. In the face of this fact, to affirm the right to practice individualism or independent action is an evidence of a lack of common sense. We are all interdependent individuals or churches, because with good sense we have at once voluntarily surrendered this right of individualism for a practice that conforms to the will of God and the good of the rest of the human race. A Christian church, if it is true to its divine origin, must be interdependent and, therefore, democratic even to the point of self-surrender.

An Adequate Form of Government.

In the next place, the definition given above

implies that a form of government must be established and accepted when interdependency takes the place of individualism.

Now government, of necessity, always imposes restraints upon the governed, but these are recognized as being for the good of the greatest number and hence are cheerfully accepted as soon as the will of a majority has expressed itself in what is called a law or statute. In the case of the church member, the Christian life was begun when the individual gave up his own will and way for the will and way of God. In other words, he submitted to be governed by the will of God and then by the will of all his fellow members with whom he voluntarily associated himself.

The highest type of people do not govern their actions by the mandate of the majority but their own will to help others in a loving spirit conquers their individual desires or preferences. They are controlled by the spirit of love and brotherhood rather than by law. To do right simply through fear of law and its penalties is to be wrong in spirit.

Government which establishes law must of necessity provide penalties for the disregard of that law. These penalties are provided in no spirit of vengeance, but are corrective rather

than punitive in all their application. But a law without a penalty is a farce.

The Church as an ideal democracy must have a measure of surrendered individualism. This surrendered individualism in its interdependent relations will have a form of government growing out of the expressed will of the majority. The laws accepted by those people thus associated together will be binding so long as the association continues, and penalties incurred will voluntarily be met by the delinquent. There will be no exemption in the application of the laws, no favored individuals or classes, but all alike without fear or favor will be governed by the laws made for that purpose. The rules agreed upon by the church will accord with God's expressed will in so far as they are applicable to the conditions and objectives in the lives of the people who are voluntarily associated together in that church. But always with the normal people love will control far more than law. Having once united with the body, the rules of which were known to him in advance, subsequent unwillingness to conform to these requirements constitute a delinquency which is not condoned by the withdrawal of the individual unless a conscious change of view has led him to a new position. If his desire to with-

draw is merely rebellion against an existing law well known to him, he becomes a rebel and should be dealt with as such.

A System of Universal Education.

The definition next implies that in the church there will be a system of education that will be so thorough as to produce a nurture and culture of all those associated together. They will all be cared for without regard to impediments to these processes of nurture and culture that might arise in individual cases. The will of the majority to institute nurture and culture for the whole body would be recognized in the life of all so long as they continued in the association, and only capacity to receive would limit the scope of the process in individual cases.

Nurture and culture are two great processes of prime importance where human or spiritual relations are concerned. Out of those two processes will come a disciplined life, and a disciplined life is the distinguishing mark of a life that is educated.

The power of a Christian democracy rests first of all upon the knowledge which every member possesses and uses of the way and the will of God. It is no kindness to allow any one to become delinquent in any phase, whether the

delinquency is caused by ignorance on the part of the individual or by failure to apply training and knowledge to the individual. In either case the result is the same, and the injury is both to the one and the whole.

If the Church of Jesus Christ is to show the world the ideal democracy, there must be no failure on her part to institute nurture and culture to the fullest possible extent in every individual in her membership. Any weakness in this connection will be a betrayal of all that is high and holy. On the other hand, there will be a clear recognition that all are not of equal endowment or capacity. The Gospel gives us ample ground for the recognition of different capacities and powers as between individuals. For instance, we are told, "Give—as God has prospered you." "As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." The parable of the talents is another divine recognition of the fallacy that we are all created equal in human endowments notwithstanding all men's fundamental equality in the sight of God. Therefore, up to the recognized capacity and opportunity of the individual, the interdependent relation will provide a uniform training and education for all its individual members. Any attempt to evade this fundamental training and teaching will involve

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the further obligation in love or in law to use every effort to correct the evasion so long as the voluntary association is binding. This is at once the requirement of the individual who has voluntarily associated himself as well as being the obligation of the group with whom the individual has become associated. It is a true democracy just in so far as the voluntary association produces the results declared to be the purpose of the association. To the extent it fails to produce the will of the majority, in that measure it becomes a departure from a democracy and therefore a menace.

The definition has a final and most important result.

A Missionary Dynamic.

It accords a complete recognition of the fact that projection is the one great purpose outside of the nurture and culture of all those within the association. All such projection, in a true democracy, must be in a spirit of pure voluntarism on the part of all who project the purposes of the Church, as well as upon the part of all who accept the advances made by the Church, whether they be individuals or other similar associated groups.

No projection by force can ever hope to succeed permanently. Force is no weapon to

use in pushing the ideals of democracy into the stronghold of autocracy. No true democracy will thrust its ideals upon others by means of brute strength as though might made right, but on the other hand, no true democracy can remain inactive in the presence of incursions by brute force or assaults upon the peaceful and peace-loving people of their number by those who invade for lust or greed. Our Master Himself, who is the Prince of Peace, repelled with force the incursions of hate and greed when the money lenders invaded the sacred precincts of the house of worship. While, therefore, the Christian Church can never rightly use force to invade another realm for selfish purposes, it has at its command a power of compulsion that is the most wonderful projecting agent in all the world of human endeavor. That is the power of a compelling love.

The marching orders of the Church are, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," and to that command we may add the other injunction implied in the teaching of a great parable, "Go and compel them to come in." Therein the Christian democracy has a world mission. Since its motive power is love it has a force unlike any other.

A democracy that is content with possessing

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within itself what it believes to be the best in life, without any concern whether or not others secure like blessings, is not only condemned by its action, but will lose within itself that best thing, for the law of life is that we can keep only as we impart to others. The Church will be able to keep its fundamental principles and powers only by using them for the betterment of all others. Stagnation and loss will always follow any other policy.

Five Reasons Why this is Vital.

There are some great and compelling reasons why the Christian democracy must constantly offer to all others whatever it possesses. Love for the Founder and for the Father is the first great reason for a spirit of missions or propagation. Obedience to the expressed will of the leader is the second impelling motive for a constant effort to progress. A desire to give others the benefits of all that is good, noble and enlarging is the third reason. The need of the people, and finally self-preservation, are the concluding reasons why the Church and the individual must peacefully, but powerfully, project itself into every available area of the world where people are to be found. True democracy can never grow by forcible annexation, but only by absorption and

assimilation of those who recognize the good in the democracy and willingly become members of the voluntary group.

Any element in a democracy that is not contained therein on a voluntary and coöperating basis is a constant indication of danger and is a tendency towards a spirit of autocracy. The power of projection rests upon the fact that a church or Christian democracy is an association of people voluntarily joined together for the purpose of learning and then doing the will of God their Father. This merger of the individual on a voluntary basis into a state of interdependence or democracy if it is to succeed must recognize the right of the associated group to do certain definite things for the good of the whole, even at the expense of limiting individuals in some directions.

THIS IDEAL DEMOCRACY WILL PRODUCE A COÖPERATING INDIVIDUALISM

In a true democracy there can be no such thing as absolute independence.

But there can and must be a thoroughly coöperative individualism which produces an interdependence that is noble and sacrificial. Every thought, word, or deed must be determined by its influence upon others. Many things that one

could do without any injury to his own life must be left undone because they might injure others. In the case of some individuals some things might be left undone with absolute safety, but if omitted by others would cause them injury; therefore, all must do them. In a democracy, the good of the whole must always supersede the individual good. The ideal democracy must, therefore, capitalize interdependence if it is to succeed, but that interdependence must first be the result of voluntary surrender on the part of the individual. Let me again reiterate, that to be within the democracy without a surrendered individualism is to be there under false pretense. It is dishonest and shameful.

A Voluntary Recognition of Authority.

An interdependent relation will at once demand a form of government which means the recognition of authority.

One of the bulwarks of this voluntary surrender on the part of the individual is the proper and adequate recognition of authority centered in a form of government which is controlled by all the people and secures for the whole, justice, peace, progress, projection, nurture, and culture.

Because the will of the majority does not suit a minority is no ground for rebellion on the part

of any minority, but cause for an expression of the highest form of democracy to be shown in cheerful submission to the properly expressed will of the majority. Majorities may sometimes be wrong but even then there are ways and means at the disposal of a minority that will not destroy the democracy. Agitation and discussion are very different from anarchy.

To fulfill its character as the ideal democracy, the Church of Jesus Christ must exhibit a high order of respect for constituted authority, both within and without its own borders.

A Regulated People.

Government or authority will of necessity lead to regulation or control. In a democracy all the individual units are not equal in talents, resources or strength of character, and therefore, the Word of God and the statutes of human democracy give ample authority for the exercise of a measure of control and regulation over the conduct of all, whether they be of large or small endowments. Without this regulation or control, proper standards of life and conduct are impossible to maintain. To allow a backward or misguided individual to destroy himself without any intervention on the part of the whole is to condone murder, for suicide is self-murder. To

allow an uneducated or subnormal individual to continue a practice that would injure others, either from ignorance or from choice, is an unthinkable thing. The will of all the people must be exercised for the good of the individuals making up the democracy.

An Educated Constituency.

The uneducated individual must be educated, or if that is not possible, then he must be regulated in his ignorance. The subnormal must be given the best and most salutary treatment in order to safeguard him and all others. So it must be with all the varied expressions of the varied individuals, they must be merged in their individualism for their own good and for the good of all the others. The spiritual life is the highest expression of life and, therefore, is of the greatest importance. To say piously that there must be no regulation after a voluntary submission of their all to the Christian democracy is to put a premium upon the inclusion of an autocracy within the democracy. That is in effect like including a stray bomb in the cargo of a ship; an explosion is likely to occur at any moment.

To allow a subnormal or delinquent to depart from the democracy once he has given himself

to it is an endorsement of autocracy and self-destruction on the one hand and an abdication of democratic principles on the other hand. The place of all others to exercise care is at the point of entrance.

The Exercise of Police Powers.

Jesus Himself recognized the police powers in the government under which He lived while on earth and even when those police powers were used to perpetrate upon Him the supreme crime of history He calmly submitted, even to the giving up of His life. If in spite of every effort on the part of the whole body, any individual continues to go contrary to the will of the whole, then either one of two things must result, corrective punishment or, as was the case with Judas, the relations of the whole with such a persistent offender and autocrat must be severed. A little clear analysis will at once reveal the vast difference between the petulant or disgruntled departure of an individual because of temporary disagreement with the authorities and the permanent severing of the relations between the democracy and the individual upon the initiative of the whole. In effect it is like a capital sentence in civil life and should be rarely used. In 1 John 2 : 19 we find the writer expressing the inevitable result of

such a case when he wrote, "They went out from us but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

RESULTS SUMMED UP FOR THE SAKE OF EMPHASIS

Interdependence, governmental authority and control in a Christian democracy are but the varied aspects of the one great divine democracy which is in effect the government of the people, by the people, for the people, in order to accomplish in the world the divine ends and objectives.

Not even the Church of Jesus Christ can long survive without government. Without properly exercised control, the interdependence is lost and the vagaries of unbridled and conflicting independency give rise to a condition of anarchy, or the power is seized by a sectarian party which assumes control with all its malignant autocracy.

If the Church is to lead the world along the path of democracy, we must conclude that it will exalt to its proper place a fitting form of government in order that all its members may fill an adequate place in the world and Church.

Furthermore nurture and culture must be universal among its membership in order to achieve

unity of purpose. The untrained or insane cannot act together in any happy effective way. Only a sane, trained, disciplined body of people can give a manifestation of unity and strength that will command the attention and admiration of other differing or antagonistic bodies or individuals.

Lack of unity in doing right things as well as lack of solidarity in divine principles is the result of a lack of nurture and culture and cannot long be permitted to continue.

WHEN A DEMOCRACY IS IDEAL

A democracy is ideal only in so far as it measures its interdependence by a government which produces a trained and disciplined body of people for the unified aims of all the individuals voluntarily associated together in the group.

We must next attempt to show how far the Church of Jesus Christ has met with success and then examine wherein it has failed to achieve this goal and finally examine its future methods.

ANALYSIS—CHAPTER II

DEMOCRACY AND EFFICIENCY

1. The hope of Democracy.
2. History and the Church Autocracy.
3. The real objective.
4. Necessary elements to promote efficiency.
 - (1) Quality of soul.
 - (2) Unity.
 - (a) Christ the basis.
 - (b) A trend towards it.
 - (3) Simplicity.
 - (4) Spirituality.
 - (5) Nurture and culture.
 - (6) Recognition of authority.
 - (7) The methods of Christ.
 - (8) Universality of expectations.
 - (9) A good stewardship.
 - (a) Love and its objective.
5. Present signs of efficiency.
 - (1) The Bible School.
 - (2) Contingent organizations.
 - (3) Finances.
 - (4) Democratized worship.
 - (5) Educational goals.
 - (6) Demand for trained ministry.
 - (7) Business assets.
 - (8) Humanized spirituality.
 - (9) Care of ministry.
 - (10) Womanhood recognized.
 - (11) Developed manhood.
6. The whole and its parts.

II

DEMOCRACY AND EFFICIENCY

THE great and divine statesman has said, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The only hope of bringing democracy into all human relations both secular and religious rests upon the unifying and cleansing power of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, the hope of bringing democracy into world, national, civic and individual relations rests upon Christianity. The Church is an organized Christian democracy and must set a worthy example to the world. Its power in this direction will lie in the exemplification of the spirit set forth in the declaration "By this ye may know that ye have passed from death unto life because ye love the brethren." Love will solve all the problems and secure efficiency in any democracy. Without it the Christian democracy must fail.

HISTORY AND THE CHURCH AUTOCRACY

In the past the Church of Jesus Christ has not

been the most efficient instrument in projecting the principles of democracy, for the pages of history are dotted with records of its autocratic failures. This is due to the fact that men have sought to make use of a divine instrument for human ends. The Church is one of God's instruments for implanting the divine into the life and every-day activities of His people and thence into all others. Wherever men have greedily sought to acquire that power for human and selfish ends it has sooner or later crushed them in the resulting catastrophe. This condition was foreshadowed by the experience of Jesus who found it necessary to refuse with a rebuke the request that James and John might have the chief seats on either side of the Master when He came to His throne. We read also of the attempt made by one Simon to buy the power of the Holy Spirit for pecuniary ends of his own.

THE REAL OBJECTIVE

Christian democracy must produce in every member divine powers and graces to be used for Christlike ends in accordance with the will of God. Its real objective is the creation of spiritual power and insight so that men shall love and serve each other as Christ has loved and served us.

NECESSARY ELEMENTS TO PROMOTE
EFFICIENCY

Let us just now consider some of the elements that must be present if the Christian democracy is to be truly efficient.

Quality of Soul.

Efficiency will be promoted when the Church remembering the lesson of Gideon's band gives first attention to the generation of spiritual powers rather than to the increase of numbers. A genuine democratic spirit will always subordinate numbers to an inherent spirit of sacrificial service. Not quantity of individuals but quality of soul and character will mark the efficiency of the organization. Given efficiency in the production of high quality of spiritual life and ultimately the numerical growth will be eminently satisfactory. A low type of character and spiritual responsiveness will in the end doom any democracy, for the hope of democracy must forever rest upon a thorough nurture and culture which imposes adequate standards and exalted character upon all who elect to follow its leadings. In other words a democracy rests upon surrendered individualism and its consequent actions for its efficiency, and surrendered indi-

vidualism is the result of the neighbor spirit spoken of by Christ which has its foundation in none other than the sacrificial spirit of God which leads one to serve another as he would serve and love himself. This precludes the possibility of popularity and thereby lessens the number of those who will accept a sacrificial task and life.

Unity.

As we have pointed out elsewhere a lack of efficiency is the result of a loss of unity. The past has seen a multiplicity of organizations in large areas and then a magnifying of groups within the local church till the original unity contemplated by the Founder of the organization has been lost in the clatter and confusion of the numerous pieces of machinery of differing organizations. Men apparently have forgotten that a spiritual and consequent democratic efficiency will not be produced by multiplying organizations that emphasize differences but by the increase of the spiritual insight which leads men to love where they do not like and therefore leads them to such a practice of neighborliness that differing points of view will not lead to separations but to such tolerations as belong to any group of individuals who have surrendered themselves to the will and purpose of God.

Christ the Basis.

If it is impossible to build a democracy upon the basis of surrendered individualism to the way and will of God, then there is little hope for a democracy that would deal with the shifting scenes and changing view-points of human wills and ways. The Christ we serve is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. His Word is our plain guide so long as we take it and not what some one thinks or has said about it. Democratic efficiency will be produced when people cease to place emphasis upon the divisive opinions and interpretations of men and once more accord authority to and place emphasis upon the clearly expressed will and way of God. In no other way can unity be secured or a neighborly love built up.

If Christians cannot be one in spirit and in organized life upon a basis of love and obedience to Christ then it seems to me that there is little hope for the unregenerate mind of the world to be able to fashion a democracy that will be anything more than a shell to be cracked by the first explosion of greed or hate upon the part of some included unit.

A Trend Towards It.

Of late the Church in larger areas has shown

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some signs of efficiency along these lines by the union of groups of people of basic similarity but with slightly different view-point upon minor matters. Until all the Baptist or Lutheran or Methodist or Presbyterian bodies can secure a unity among all of their own basic names it is idle to talk of any further union along democratic or federalized lines.

Simplicity.

Efficiency is promoted by simplicity. The Church instituted by Christ was magnificently simple. We must have in our modern world various avenues for expression in order to meet the needs that confront the Church of to-day. But the organization must be simple and adaptable and not complex and cumbersome. The machinery of any democracy reaches the danger-point when it unduly leads to the exaltation of workers or classes of work. Any approach to autocracy, to a machine-made leadership, to wheels within wheels, to a man-made expression of authority will in the end be self-limiting and self-destructive. History has taught us that simplicity and service but not supremacy are the signs of efficiency. The one great badge of honor in a democracy is service. Position, power, intellectual endowment, possessions are all mere

baubles and meaningless until turned to the service of Christ and our fellow creatures. Such is the simple plan of Christ.

Spirituality.

Efficiency will be marked in the Christian democracy by the attainment on the part of every individual of a measure of spiritual activity and culture. The measure of attainment will be according to the capacity and opportunity of the individual. To-day there is tremendous difference between the best and worst elements in the membership of the Church, a difference due to the non-participation in its activities on the part of large numbers of people. There should always be a difference between those of highest ideals and best attainments and those of poor attainment and low ideals. But all will possess spiritual ideals that are worth while and attainments that mark them as differing from the unredeemed in the world when the Christian democracy is efficiently administered. The marked variety of ideals and attainments found to-day has undoubtedly come from the utter failure of the Church to provide a nurture in spiritual infancy, this to be followed by an adequate educational program which produces a culture of the soul while it trained the mind and

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body to recognize the authority of the Word of God and of the democracy.

Nurture and Culture.

Efficiency must be shown in the application of the practice of nurture and then of every pedagogic principle till the lack of knowledge and the consequent lack of divine practices has disappeared in practically all the normal members.

Recognition of Authority.

Beyond that, with a proper foundation of knowledge and nurture efficiency will produce such a recognition of properly constituted authority as will be a distinguishing mark of the Christian democracy. It will be just one more manifestation of the reality of the surrendered individuality of each member. That will produce further efficiency.

The Methods of Christ.

Efficiency will be produced by a study of the methods of Christ, as we learn to adjust the individual ideas, idiosyncrasies and expressions to the demands of a thoroughgoing spirit of service along democratic lines. The individuality then merged for interdependent activities will more and more learn to shape all the activities of the

life so as to meet the demands for service from the Church in civic or national spheres of activity.

Universality of Expectation.

Again the real efficiency of the body will be revealed by the ability to meet the necessary and wise demands of the Christian democracy that aim to secure a just distribution of the bounties of God, the privileges of the church membership and the continuous joys of Christian service. These things cannot be expected to appear spontaneously in the life any more than good table manners will appear in the life of a child. Instruction, training and persistent example alone will produce the necessary result.

A Good Stewardship.

Finally a genuine efficiency will only be produced in the Christian democracy when the individuals believe themselves to be stewards of the living God and that all natural endowments, advantages and possessions are entrusted by the Donor to the individual that he may develop a power to administer to the enrichment of his own soul by giving magnificently of all good things in his possession. In a thoroughgoing democracy duties will always accompany privileges.

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Love and its Objective.

Love always seeks communion with the object of its affection. It is worse than mockery, it is hypocrisy to proclaim a love for Christ and then to fail to produce the results which are the legitimate fruitage of that love. True love is always costly to the lover. Efficiency methods in the Christian democracy will so increase the cost of its privileges and duties that they will ultimately become the most costly phase of the life. There is ample warrant in Scripture for that expectation when we remember "So likewise whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple." If you have not committed your all to Christ you are in the wrong place when you are in the Church of Jesus Christ. Hence an efficient Christian democracy will produce a race of individuals with the heroic and sacrificial spirit, so that any cost will be met to save the world through service in Christ's way. That is being a good steward of the manifold mercies and graces of the Lord God.

PRESENT SIGNS OF EFFICIENCY

Let us at this point remember the things that the Christian democracy has been doing with real efficiency.

The Bible School.

Enrolled in the Bible schools of the Protestant churches are more than twenty-two million scholars and a force of teachers and officers aggregating over a million and a half. No other single piece of organized propaganda, comparable to this, is to be found anywhere in American life. It is an achievement of a portentous character. The Church is thus enabled to keep alive in the hearts of those millions the simple evangelical truths of the Gospel, and it is in the Gospel of Christ that we find the power of unity and of democracy.

Contingent Organizations.

The Church has fostered organization in world areas where the limitations of the local church do not affect the situation. These outside organizations depend upon the Church for their personal and money resources and some of them thus manned by church members and supported by their money are most potent factors in world, in national, and in civic life. I refer to the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, Christian colleges, schools, hospitals and similar organizations. Without the Christian Church these activities would not have been humanly possible.

Finances.

Next we must remember that the Church has in recent years democratized its finances by refusing national or state support and by ending the selling of its sittings and in lieu of these means of support has come to the place where a stewardship on the part of every member is expected to produce giving regularly and proportionately. This achievement is not yet wholly accomplished but the principles of it have been clearly recognized in every group and the spiritual forces are at work to put them into practice. In the past five years it is safe to say that the number of church members enrolled as regular contributors has more than doubled. The next great aim is to push the Scriptural idea of stewardship until it covers every phase of life and every child of God has the spiritual idea contained in these following verses: "The life is more than meat" and "A man's life consisteth not in the things which he possesses." Where this has been worked out so as to reach a great majority of the individuals who have surrendered themselves to an interdependent relation, the great pauper and indigent class in the Christian democracy will practically be ended. They are fast disappearing and this is a genuine sign of efficiency.

Democratized Worship.

The services of worship of the Church have been largely democratized, and poor and rich alike find ample welcome in any house of worship where the Gospel of Christ is preached. This has been brought about in part by the new approach made by the Church to the forces outside their organization. The new social spirit has radically changed the ideas and methods of many churches in spite of the fact that many do not yet like the common term "social service." The name is relatively unimportant when compared with the actual results accomplished, for social barriers are broken down as men learn to work together at a common task. As people work together in national, in civic, and in Christian service the hindrances to unity and neighborly love most effectually disappear.

Educational Goals.

The direct contribution made by the Church to the educational facilities of the day is an achievement denoting efficiency. We have said before that the strength of any democracy rests largely upon the intelligence of its constituency. It is now a fundamental recognition that the Church must produce its own leadership and consequently must provide adequate educational

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advantages under Christian leaders. A democracy must have leaders growing out of its own life and teaching, so the Christian democracy has learned that it cannot allow even the State to educate its future leaders in institutions of great erudition which, however, lack fundamental ethical bases because they are prohibited from teaching the Word of God and therefore are shut off from the only sure foundation for any real character building. No education is complete or sound that does not pay adequate attention to spiritual truths.

Demand for Trained Ministry.

The insistent demand for a trained as well as an educated ministry has already led to some changes in the curriculum of the theological seminaries. Greater changes are impending which will result in giving to the student such clinical advantages as will produce men both of culture and power of executive leadership. The production of a better trained ministry will have the further effect of producing a corps of trained lay officers in every local democracy. A trained ministry will be able to prepare clinically all those chosen by the votes of the group to occupy the places of leadership. Thus efficiency is shown, which is worthy of recognition, when it is re-

membered that the Church has always been slow to change its processes. But to-day these changes are produced harmoniously and effectively.

Business Assets.

Another mark of efficiency in the processes of the Christian democracy is the demand for and then the utilizing of the business powers and acumen of men of large affairs in commerce. At last the Church is making her business operations to be businesslike and efficient.

Humanized Spirituality.

Large progress has been made in the breaking down of the austere aspects of Christianity. While retaining its spiritual note it has been humanized in the eyes of many. Christianity is not necessarily austere or severe. It may present some aspects of that character under some conditions of life, but it also has its joyful and happy sides while retaining its reverential attitude towards God. The world of late has begun to be impressed with this fact by the concern of the Church to furnish proper social life and amusement for all its constituency. The Christian democracy of the past was constantly sounding a note of negation, "This is wrong," "You must not do this." No interdependent relation

will thrive long on negatives. So to-day modern church structures usually contain ample facilities for the social recreation and amusement of the various groups in her membership. This is becoming true even in rural regions, usually considered difficult to change in such matters, but often found to be quite as progressive as the city. Plans are being made to push widely this humanized approach of things spiritual until it has permeated every local church.

Care of Ministry.

Another marked evidence of an efficient spirit in the Christian democracy is the concern to provide ample pensions for old or disabled ministers and missionary workers. Salaries for many decades have been shamefully low and therefore many a worn-out servant of the Church became a charitable object. A proper value is rapidly being placed upon such service by the democracy and, while salaries are being steadily pushed up, pension funds are being created which will care for the worn-out workers of the Church on a self-respecting basis.

Womanhood Recognized.

The Church has always been conservative along many lines, and one particular example

has been in regard to her womanhood. While counted as a democracy in many ways, in a number of groups the women have been partially or wholly disfranchised. Yet womenkind constitute about sixty-two per cent. of the members of the average church. But the democracy has of late been banishing such limitations and this is surely a mark of efficiency.

Developed Manhood.

Men in the membership of the Christian democracy, while usually holding in their hands the bulk of the official positions, have often not bulked large in participation of a virile character. Many a local church and some communions have been "menarchies" and that is worse than a world monarchy, because the Church is supposed to belong to Christ and to follow His divine principles and so there is far less excuse for any group of believers to exercise unjust discrimination as between men and women. Christianity has always stood for the exaltation of womanhood and the equality of all human souls in the sight of God. But of late a new sense of responsibility has come to many men and to-day they are reaching out in an efficient measure of coöperation that promises large things for the future and has already produced some marked contributions

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to the power and resources of many a local group or group of larger area. These several manifestations of efficiency when examined and related to the Christian democracy are found to be quite largely concerned with the larger and organized aspects of the Christian religion. While the progress in the local areas has made possible this growth and efficiency, not enough progress has been made in local areas to make the Church fully able to meet the needs of the situation. The local democracy will never become thoroughly efficient until a much more efficient system of nurture and culture is applied which will insistently subject every individual to its processes. On the other hand, full recognition must be given to the cumulative power of the eleven manifestations of present day efficiency just cited as being found in the Christian democracy. It is safe to say that no other group in all the world can approach the sum total of those eleven items.

THE WHOLE AND ITS PARTS

The efficiency of the whole depends upon the efficiency of the individual unit, and in the immediate future the problem of making the individual, who has supposedly surrendered his individuality for his own good and the good of

all the others, into a competent interdependent part of the whole, must be solved for the good of the Church and the good of the world.

Only a competent, efficient, resultful Christian democracy will be able to convince the world of the power of Christ and the value of democracy.

ANALYSIS—CHAPTER III

DEMOCRACY AND INEFFICIENCY

1. A picture of failure.
2. A description of inefficiency.
3. A divine institution conducted by frail humanity.
4. A purpose behind the divine institution.
 - (1) The lack of unity which spoils the purpose.
5. Variety of expression not cause of inefficiency.
 - (1) Type of government not the cause.
6. Restating our definition of Christian democracy.
7. The Church examined on the basis of that definition shows a lack of intelligence which causes inefficiency.
 - (1) Failure to properly surrender individuality.
 - (2) Inability to produce nurture and culture.
 - (3) A cheapened idea of individual responsibility.
 - (4) A lack of service in its interests.

Statistical and other proof to emphasize these failures.
8. A question concerning the cause of these failures shows these further inefficiencies.
 - (1) A failure of human administration.
 - (2) Idealism without resultant government.
 - (3) A lack of love.
9. A further query concerning delinquency in a Christian democracy.

10. All inefficiency classified or grouped for the sake of emphasis.
 - (1) Faulty idealism.
 - (2) Inadequate government.
 - (3) Lack of nurture and culture.
 - (4) Failure to progress.
 - (5) Untrained officary.
 - (6) Sex distinction.
 - (7) Divisive elements in unit.
11. In spite of failure, ideals of democracy are still the goal of the Church.
12. The law of averages.

III

DEMOCRACY AND INEFFICIENCY

MANY times while riding on a train you have watched a collie dog come tearing out of a farmyard at the noise of the approaching cars and rush with surprising speed towards the train as if intent upon catching it. You have wondered what the dog would do if he should really catch the train. He could not bite its lower extremities as he might a sheep, nor could he drive it whither he would. He could only stand helpless and look at what was before him. The thing is too big for him to handle and if he got in its way it would soon crush him to death. The dog is not to blame; he should have been taught not to waste his energy on such a useless race. The picture thus presented is a serious one from the dog's standpoint, but it does not disturb the train at all.

A DESCRIPTION OF INEFFICIENCY

Men and women have professed faith in Christ Jesus and joined His Church, often in a haste comparable to the approach of the dog to the train,

but it was not a reasoned, studied approach, for when they supposedly have voluntarily surrendered themselves to the will of God and joined the Christian democracy, they are found in large numbers to be inactive in the organization, having a name to live on the church roll, but being dead if judged by the findings of their daily lives. It is of great importance to the Church that a study of available statistics, corroborated by a further study of the local church life will reveal that each year half as many are dropped or excluded as are added to the organization upon profession of faith. To express this statement concretely, a given denomination added eight and a half per cent. to its membership in one year by profession of faith and in that same period removed for disciplinary causes or non-participation about four per cent. It is a well-known fact that church discipline is very lax and is difficult to put in operation and only urgent necessity produces it. So it is proper to conclude that many more are retained that should be subjected to similar discipline. A well-known minister of wide experience has said that in a national army deserters are shot, but if the Church undertook such an operation the supply of ammunition would run out before the conclusion of the punishment. This fact is pur-

posely thrown out into bold relief at the beginning of this discussion upon inefficiency in order to make plain the fact that the Christian democracy is not efficiently administering its individual units, and an undue amount of failures are resulting.

A DIVINE INSTITUTION CONDUCTED BY FRAIL HUMANITY

The Church is divine in its conception and origin; of that there can be no question, but its divine originator purposed that His Church should be maintained and projected through human agents who give themselves up to Him for His purposes. And it is therefore not a failure of the divine that we face, but rather a failure of human agencies to submit themselves for divine ends. Any failure of the church member is in no sense a failure of the divine element, but of the human, and the organized Church of to-day is intensely human in its failures. Nor must we forget that in some great things the Church has done work of tremendous and far-reaching import to the glory of her divine founder. But for the present, let us go back to an examination of the inefficiencies in the Christian democracy and find out in particular their scope and effect upon the organization and the world.

A PURPOSE BEHIND THE DIVINE INSTITUTION

One of the purposes lying behind the origin of the Church was the construction of Christian character. This could not be done wholly upon an individualistic basis. It must be done in part by contact and coöperation with the lives of others. For Christian character is not a gift outright, nor is it the result merely of a profession, but it consists largely of an unselfish Christ seeking life which is shown to the world in the expression of an individualism surrendered for the express purpose of helping others in the name of and for the sake of Christ. Hence the Christian democracy grew apace, for in its associations, its contacts, its service, its sacrifice and its worship would be found both the test of and the growth from the changed relation towards God that produced a sound profession of faith in Him and then an alliance with others who were similarly related to Him. In other words, an initial proof of the right to belong to the democracy of Christ is found in conformity to the prayer of our Lord, "That they all may be one."

The Lack of Unity Which Spoils the Purpose.

Unity is essential to democracy. Such unity will have individual expression. That is part of

God's plan and does not limit the power of the democracy, but rather manifests the power and reality of its unity. To determine the efficiency or inefficiency of the democracy, let us seek out the facts that will tell the story of the Church along this line.

VARIETY OF EXPRESSION NOT CAUSE OF INEFFICIENCY

Unity was not designed to be negative in its character or regulation, but positive in its beliefs and expressions along essential lines. We proceed now to the discussion of the causes of inefficiency in the Christian democracy. It is often claimed that subscription to a creed will fail to produce individual expression of Christian faith and this has led many to accentuate an independence that is just as harmful as following too credulously the formally adopted expression of some other person's faith. An equal amount of failure or inefficiency has resulted wherever groups have followed either of these principles. In fact a close study of the two widely separated groups, the one intensely individualistic in its form of expression, and the other united in the acceptance of a creed, will certainly show that the delinquencies and failures are alike both in character and in number. What inefficiency

there is cannot, therefore, be the result of a creed or lack of one. Over-emphasized or under-emphasized individualism is a potent foe to democracy. In fact it is in genesis and result autocracy of a most dangerous type. On the other hand, a form of religion which does not contain the true spirit of Christian faith and character will produce another form of autocracy that will ultimately destroy true democracy. No matter which type of church the reader may believe in, he is compelled to look from both ends towards a center for the real causes of inefficiency. I repeat, both types of expression have similar inefficiencies in about equal amounts.

Type of Government Not the Cause.

Nor can the failure be ascribed to the particular form of government used by a local church or group of churches. Whatever inefficiency is to be found lies beyond a form of government and seems to be personal in its tendencies rather than governmental. The inefficiencies are alike personal and cumulative only in the measure that personal failures cause a failure on the part of an associated group. Can it be that, like the dog before referred to, these individuals have caught a train only to discover it to be a possession which they can neither use nor enjoy?

RESTATING OUR DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRACY

We have said that democracy in its Christian form is a brotherhood of the followers of Jesus Christ who have voluntarily associated themselves together in a spirit of fraternity and equality for the purpose of nurture, culture and the development of a similar spirit of brotherhood throughout the world.

We shall do well just now to examine carefully how far the local churches fail to express this definition of Christian democracy. Of course there are a few churches that do their great tasks with real efficiency so as to measure beyond most of the others, but in general one local church is only a little better or a little worse than all the others. The law of averages holds good in church life just as it does in life or fire insurance.

THE CHURCH EXAMINED ON THE BASIS OF THAT
DEFINITION SHOWS A LACK OF INTELLI-
GENCE WHICH CAUSES INEFFICIENCY

In the first chapter is presented the plan of an ideal democracy and it indicates that to be efficient, the following must be found in the life of the Church: interdependence, nurture, culture, government, and control with its consequent

police powers, and finally projection with its consequent service.

Failure to Properly Surrender Individuality.

Voluntarism presupposes intelligent study of the principles and practices which underlie and govern the original group which is voluntarily joined together. Interdependence to be effective must be entered into willingly and knowingly. But a loving examination to-day of any large number of church members would reveal the fact that hosts of people in the Christian democracy do not know why they are in the organization, nor the ends for which it exists. Many of them I fear are like an emigrant who said that he came to America because of the stories he heard about the wealth to be gained and the opportunities for freedom and equality presented therein; then he added, "but they did not tell how hard you must work to get money, nor the price one must pay to be free to enjoy the equalities of the people in this country." Then he concluded, "I go back to my old country." In like manner, many a professing Christian has sought out the Church hurriedly, but has soon found it to be a place of great opportunity and privilege, and consequently a place of resulting service and hardship. It is to be feared that much inefficiency and failure in

the local church has been caused because the individual has not really surrendered himself to God first and then intelligently to the Christian democracy for all the purposes for which it was called into being. The full surrender to God in the name of Jesus Christ will have produced that greatest of all divine results in the human life, a new birth. Without this regeneration all else will ultimately fail.

Inability to Produce Nurture and Culture.

A life truly nurtured in its infancy and then properly educated and trained develops a desire to participate in all that the democracy stands for. To join, with a statement that I have faith in God and in His Son Jesus when I do not know nor am I instructed in what is involved by that declaration of faith, is neither a good democratic practice nor a common-sense Christian principle. So we are brought face to face with those words, nurture and culture. The Church or Christian democracy has failed of efficiency in so far as it has failed to produce nurture and culture of every individual member. In all normal cases the twin practices of nurture and culture will produce a voluntary participation in all that makes a democracy strong. In the past the Church has not in any adequate manner produced a nurture for

those who associated themselves with the local body. Nurture is concerned in particular with the initial stages of life ; it does its best work in the days before, during and immediately following infancy. Spiritual infancy has great need of nurture and because it has not been applied properly to the lives of the newly born souls is one great reason for much of the inefficiency that exists in the local Christian democracy of to-day.

A Cheapened Idea of Individual Responsibility.

It does not matter what type of an organized democracy you join, your helpful participation will depend upon your intelligence. Without intelligent interdependence both the individual and the group will fail. The Christian democracy has oftentimes sought to make entry into its membership quick and easy with the idea that it would thereby attract the many. This has so cheapened the benefits to be derived from the organization as to make them seem worthless and in the long run has defeated the very purpose in the divine mind that originated the institution, and also the objective sought by those uniting with it later. The Christian democracy is inefficient wherever it has become cheap or easy of attainment. Certainly Christ never in-

tended His followers to regard His way as either cheap or easy, as those words from His lips plainly testify (Luke 14:27 and 33): "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

A Lack of Service in Its Interests.

The price of intelligence is generally hard work and hard work is a tremendous power in the world of values. The intellectual processes cause inward agitation and outward perturbation and therein is one of the chief values of education. It is a powerful process in disciplining the individual and the safety and value of the Christian democracy depend in a considerable degree upon the disciplined unity of the individuals comprising the group. Is there any one who really knows the Christian democracy of to-day who would be willing to assert that it is composed of Christlike disciplined people to any great extent? Therein is found one of the factors contributing to its present inefficiency.

Statistical and Other Proof for Emphasis.

But it might be claimed that except for the opening statement these other things are glitter-

ing generalities, so we must particularize in order to demonstrate the measure of our present inefficiency. Let me repeat that the inefficiency is not on the part of the divine organization projected by the Lord, but is due entirely to the human administration concerned with it. The train is complete and perfect but the train crew have not been properly trained to run it and are incompetent.

Many hundreds of times in the past few years large groups of men and women have been asked to determine to the best of their knowledge the percentage of efficiency shown by the local churches within their personal knowledge. This percentage was to be determined by the measure of their spiritual attainment in worship and devotion shown by the members as well as upon the degree of sacrifice shown in constructing an organization and then utilizing it to serve its members, the community in which it was placed, and the world beyond. The service considered was to be rendered through three great agencies, money, personality and intercession.

In such groups there are always a few who are somewhat irresponsible for what they may say, yet never has any one ventured to affirm that more than thirty per cent. of efficiency was produced. Many have said that less than five per

cent. of efficiency was shown by the Christian democracy, but there has always been a very general agreement that ten per cent. was a safe and generous estimate. In other words, through inefficiency the Christian democracy is losing ninety per cent. of its power and opportunity.

A QUESTION CONCERNING THE CAUSE OF THESE
FAILURES SHOWS THESE FURTHER
INEFFICIENCIES

May we not properly ask if the democratic principle is the cause of this inefficiency? Is this appalling failure due to the fact that the Christian democracy is not a proper instrument or channel for the interpretation of Christ love and service?

A Failure of Human Administration.

In fleeing from the autocracy of sin to the interdependent relations with God and our fellow Christians we have failed to realize all the possible advantages and find that we have lost a measure of love, of unity, of neighborliness, so that together we are unable to produce the needed nurture and culture which would make effective the life with all its powers that was entrusted to us for service in the world. God has not failed us as we have failed Him in that we

left an autocracy of sin and on the way to democracy we stopped with the Bolsheviki—those poor deluded idealists who without nurture or culture in democracy mistook sentiment for a love that was of great cost because of intelligent priceless service. Bolshevism is idealism without love or common sense. It is an attempt to govern by ideals but without a settled basis for governing. Hence sooner or later it progresses towards anarchy and autocracy.

Idealism Without Resultant Government.

The Christian democracy has failed on its human side in proportion as it has ideals and no resulting government with wise laws and restraints to lead the whole people towards the attainment of those ideals.

For instance, God calls every child of His a steward. In love He desires that we shall administer our stewardship according to His will. He must, therefore, have the first-fruits of our time, our energy, our talents, and our possessions. Nor must it be forgotten that what our Father asks in love He also commands in His capacity as Lord and Master.

A Lack of Love.

In our voluntary submission to Him we professed our love and obedience. We also gave

ourselves up to His Lordship. The double obligation rests upon every one to follow His will because we love Him and because we are His servants. A love that is scorned or mocked is in the end a lost love, and a law persistently broken must have a consequent penalty. Is it a matter of common experience that the Christian democracy pays attention to the requirements of love and visits upon the breaker of laws the penalties of the broken law?

To hear of church discipline in this day is to hear of a very unusual procedure and consequently love has lost its meaning and law has become a farce with a consequent measure of inefficiency. This must not be construed as a plea for punitive discipline, but rather for restoration of such a unity that love will compel an efficiency honoring to all concerned. Where love finally fails then law shall take its course in order to strengthen the purposes of life. The Christian democracy is inefficient in proportion as love and law are not used to produce God's expectation from every steward who has united with the organization on the basis of a surrendered individualism and a consequent interdependence. The whole body must endeavor steadily and progressively to secure results that are commensurate with the endowments, the op-

portunities and possessions of every member and in particular secure a democracy wherein all alike and in due measure worship, work and give for the maintenance of the whole organization. Nor will it do to be so slow and supine in securing the necessary results that the slowness will be an open encouragement of failure. Therein lies another cause of inefficiency.

A FURTHER QUERY CONCERNING DELINQUENCY IN A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY

A leading layman in the membership of a country church asked this question: "Does making a profession of faith and then joining the church cause the loss of an ethical sense?" Asked to explain the purport of his question, he said, "In my church are more than twenty men whose word is good in the business world, as good as their bond in most cases, but in the church it is good for nothing. They have made certain well-defined promises to God and the church, but they cannot be made to fulfill those promises, and it is common knowledge that they are quite capable of immediately fulfilling them if they determined to do so." The question and statement reveal a very common delinquency in the life of the ordinary local church, and therein lies another source of inefficiency. Is it because

such delinquency is part and parcel of a democracy? The Christian democracy is confronted with that condition on every hand. If a Christian democracy is the breeding ground of lying and dishonesty, of supineness and weakness and then of the failure of authority and discipline, there is small hope that the world reaching out for democracy will find in the interdependent state the golden fruit that has been envisioned.

But the man of clear vision will not discount the principle of democracy because of instances which may come under his notice. This failure is but the invasion of democracy by an insidious form of autocracy. Let the Christian democracy assert itself and drive out the sentimental weakling who breeds autocracy in the midst of democracy on the plea that "you cannot *make* any one do that." To admit such a plea is to banish love with its compelling power as well as to banish the tremendous power of a majority who set a delinquent minority a good example and then call on that minority for the purposes of the democracy to be fulfilled by an adequate response. Not to do this is to cultivate inefficiency.

ALL INEFFICIENCY CLASSIFIED OR GROUPED
FOR THE SAKE OF EMPHASIS

To sum up this discussion of democracy and

inefficiency, notice that the failures of the Church when analyzed can be classified in groups.

Faulty Idealism.

First there is the inefficiency due to a distorted expression of idealism that lies behind any democracy. The ideals are not expressed by ideal people.

Inadequate Government.

Then there is the inefficiency due to faulty government largely to be ascribed to untrained officials and poor organization. In this connection we are compelled to draw attention to the production of a large class of members who seemingly are above the law of democracy and beyond the reach of its loving ministry if present conditions are to govern our judgment in the case. A privileged class is a dangerous class in any interdependent state.

Lack of Nurture and Culture.

Next there comes the inefficiency consequent upon faulty or absent nurture and culture. This leads sooner or later to a lack of unity and then by various stages to differences of character and attainment with its consequent loss of achievement.

Failure to Progress.

Then there is the inefficiency that grows apace when projecting powers are not encouraged and built into the life of each member. The dynamic of the Christian life lies in the love that determines to let all the world know about the Lover who died to save the object of His love, and that without regard to cost.

Untrained Officiary.

Next there is the inefficiency due to a leadership that is limited in its powers because it has been educated but not clinically trained. Is not this the case with the graduates of very many of the theological seminaries?

All of these groups in consequence of inherent weaknesses are unable to relate the divine powers and graces to the needs of their democracy as could be done if the weaknesses were eliminated. As a further consequence, democracy is endangered in the eyes of the world when it looks upon the weaknesses betrayed by the Christian democracy.

Sex Distinction.

Two other matters must be considered before we pass on to discuss other phases of the topic. One concerns the fostering by the Christian de-

mocracy of sex distinction. In some particulars the Church has led in the recognition of the rights of womanhood consequent upon their treatment upon a common basis with all the other human beings by the plan of salvation and the command to evangelize the whole world. Yet it is worthy of note that a large measure of inefficiency has been fostered in the Christian democracy by an unjust and unchristian discrimination against women Christians. If a true democracy is a government of the people, by the people, for the people, why has the Church until recently persisted in refusing to women members their democratic rights? The discrimination has foisted into many an office a man who though utterly incompetent has been given the place of responsibility. At certain periods in the history of the Church the Word of God has been interpreted as putting a sex limit upon the filling of certain specified offices in the Church, but even with the acceptance of that interpretation only a spirit of man-made autocracy has prevented the church offices and the governing bodies from being filled upon the basis of ability to render competent service. The reply often given is that if competency was to determine, then the women would secure all the places of responsibility. The reply furnishes its own refutation in the

assurance that men would soon become competent enough to compete with women of ability, so that there would be an equitable basis of distribution as well as a great advance in the competency of all.

Divisive Elements in Unit.

In the United States we have a good example of a federal government. There are towns, cities, counties and states which exercise governmental functions for the areas they represent, but they are all subordinated for federal purpose to a national government. In the Christian democracy we have a dangerous situation, particularly in the local churches because the Bible School, the Young People's Society, the Women's organization or some other part of the whole is not properly federalized into a strong unit which while exercising needed control and taxation for the good of the whole, yet permits activity and organization for some particular end belonging to such a segment.

A broken up, unrelated, non-coöperating set of small units with governmental functions in a local church is a sign of inefficiency and often of an autocratic spirit in a segment. The same statement is true concerning units in larger areas which cling to a distinguishing name, but refuse

to federalize with the whole body covered by the distinguishing name.

Present day forms of Christian democracy are organized on the basis of love for God and a consequent love for fellow men and in particular for those of the organized group to which the individual belongs. The immediate danger which results from this relation founded in love is that it will fail in efficient administration between a sentimental fear to administer properly the responsibility and an autocratic system founded on law which works without regard to individuality. But if the Church cannot successfully surmount that difficulty, then there is little hope that the people of the world minus the impelling love of God and the consequent Christlike love of their neighbor will be able to succeed in democratizing human relations and governments.

IN SPITE OF FAILURE IDEALS OF DEMOCRACY ARE STILL THE GOAL OF THE CHURCH

Up to the present time it is to be feared that the Christian democracy as shown in this chapter has not made a notable success in the use of the principles of democracy or in the development of its spirit in the lives of its members. It is still a hope and a possibility, but not yet an actuality in the lives of Christian people organized

in local churches and then in communions. The ideals of democracy are already seen, the desire for democracy is very great and its principles are constantly being held up for public approbation, but in the attempt to administer democracy this chapter would indicate that much has yet to be accomplished by the Church if she would show the world the real value of democracy. How can this be done efficiently is the next question we must face.

In the past the organized groups of believers have strenuously resented criticism even when it was constructive and kindly, but that era has passed.

To-day the Church faces its task in the world with the desire to know what must be attempted and then to find the most efficient ways of doing its work to the best advantage of all concerned. It invites criticism that is constructive and will lead to the discovery of failure.

STATISTICS

Church statistics have always been accepted with a measure of doubt because too often they were gathered hastily and without the coöperation of scientific help.

Whatever doubt may be cast upon church statistics it is impossible to cast discredit upon the

law of averages which is found in successful operation in every sphere of human endeavor.

Church life furnishes ample proof of the efficiency and reliability of this law of averages, so it is to be hoped that whatever tabulation of facts found in this and other chapters will be judged by the law of averages rather than upon the basis of their being "just church statistics."

ANALYSIS—CHAPTER IV

DEMOCRACY AND DISCIPLINE

1. A product of Democracy.
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3. Surrendered individualism.
4. Punishment and discipline.
5. Discipline essential.
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9. A study of discipline :
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 - (3) The products of discipline :
 - (a) A spiritual Church.
 - (b) A serving Church.
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IV

DEMOCRACY AND DISCIPLINE

A DISCIPLINED individual unit is one of the finest products of a true democracy. The discipline is the result of a nurture and culture that produces an interdependent being whose powers and possessions are used in neighborly love for the service and good of others. Unregulated, uncontrolled, and even misdirected individual units in any democracy are a continual menace and will constantly tend to grow worse. In the world about us insanity, idiocy, subnormality, outlawry, ignorance, disease, and death, are part of the price paid for a lack of discipline in the life.

THE MARK OF POWER IN A BELIEVER

In any group of believers the mark of the Christian power and graces should be a disciplined body, mind and soul. To serve Christ is to have surrendered self. To be part of the Christian democracy is to have reached the place where individualism has been merged into interdependence and therefore self-will, like or dislike, self-

ishness and wrong self-seeking are vigorously excluded in every possible way from the relations sustained towards fellow members and God. This is not easy in any life. Christ never promised ease to His followers, but plainly warned them of cross bearing and sacrifice; but ultimate victory was also promised. To live this Christ life the redemptive work of divine grace must have begun in the life through being born again, then there will of necessity be required a soul and body that is disciplined. In such a life attitudes are first of all more important than information, and habits must often precede principles. To illustrate: A child must be taught to reverence and love God long before much information concerning Him is given and a habit is formed in the child life long before the mind of the little one is capable even of comprehending the principles that lie behind the necessity for the habit. That beautiful habit of childhood, prayer, is an example.

SURRENDERED INDIVIDUALISM

It is a striking fact that a surrendered individualism, disciplined after divine redemptive processes have begun, is the one great source of the strength essential to a good thoroughgoing democracy. That source of strength is indi-

viduality of a commanding type. Scripture is once more vindicated in its statement that to lose a life for Christ's sake is to save it. Discipline and surrendered individualism have much in common.

PUNISHMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Punishment and discipline are quite different and must not be confused even when punishment is understood to be corrective and not punitive. A disciplined body or soul is one under control of the mind and spiritual power in the life. The control is exercised for the highest good of whatever or whoever is concerned and it is exercised as the will of the disciplined individual. It includes both positive and negative attitudes. It is not the result primarily of force outside but of power within.

DISCIPLINE ESSENTIAL

Discipline is essential to any democracy and it can only be the product of nurture and culture. Not even divine grace can do more than sow the seed of it. It is not a thing of momentary growth, but the product of time, energy and concentration and also of self-sacrifice. In the life of a Christian it is furthermore the product of love for God and the constant ministry of divine grace in the human heart and life. Yet it must be

pointed out here that an individual of clear vision would seek discipline from self-interest in order to get the most and best in life. Of course even then the cost of it must be paid in thorough surrender.

SOME DEFINITIONS

The dictionary definitions of the word discipline are interesting. Here are several: "Cultivation and improvement comprehending instruction in correct sentiments, morals, manners and due subordination to authority," "subjection to laws, rules, order, precepts or regulations as, 'the troops are under excellent discipline.'" From these definitions it will be seen that the word disciple and discipline are of common origin and meaning. Two verses of Scripture considered here will relate our whole discussion of democracy to the intent and heart of all God's plan for His people. "Go ye unto all the world and disciple all nations teaching them to observe all things that I have said unto you" and "That the trial of your faith which is much more precious than gold which perisheth though it be tried by fire might be found worthy of honor and glory and praise at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus we are led to see that our study of the ideal democracy brings us to the place where the essential element in that democracy is

found to be the sort of person God had in mind in His plan for the world's redemption when He told His people to go and seek in the world the unredeemed and then in the language of the apostle just quoted, prove their faith by trial.

OUR DEFINITION OF A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY

But once again let us remind ourselves of the definition of Christian democracy given in chapter one. "A Christian democracy is a brotherhood of the followers of Jesus Christ who have voluntarily associated themselves together in a spirit of fraternity and equality for the purposes of nurture, culture and the development of a similar spirit throughout the world." This seems to add the one essential element lacking in the dictionary definition of discipline when it adds the idea of projection by love and power and without force to the ideas of nurture and culture in the production of a democracy of discipline. A Christian democracy is but a body of well disciplined children of God. Democracy subordinates things to people and the Christian democracy subordinates everything to the great Person, Christ.

A STUDY OF DISCIPLINE

Let us conclude this discussion of the Chris-

tian democracy, therefore, by a concise study of three things in connection with discipline. While we have already discussed the relation of discipline to the efficiency of the Church we now face the matter again from another point of view.

What Prevents and Destroys Discipline ?

First, what prevents and destroys discipline ? Discipline is essential to the well-being of democracy. Without obtruding the obvious we will begin by mentioning improper public opinion.

Public Opinion.

The place of public opinion is important in a democracy. Many times it is but the behest of the slacker, the parasite and the lawbreaker. Certain types of public opinion are often used for purposes of sinister control for personal ends. That is autocracy in its last analysis. The will of all the people is not to be expressed by an intangible public opinion, but by a public opinion which expresses itself in a vote. Public opinion of the harmful type is largely intangible, invisible and insidious, but a public vote is just the reverse. The Church must not be controlled by a harmful public opinion but by the proper public expressions of its disciplined individual units. Improper public opinion destroys discipline.

Class Distinctions.

Class distinctions are decidedly dangerous to discipline. To raise a ministerial group as against a lay group is the height of folly. Such groups have their place on the surface just as there is a place in the national life for a democrat or republican, provided they are true Americans first of all. But to be party politicians in the face of the real interests of the country, is to betray ourselves. So to preserve a sex distinction or a class difference to the destruction of efficiency and justice is to destroy both discipline and the democracy in the Church. To entrench an official class for life with inherent official powers of great reach is ultimately to destroy discipline even in the Christian democracy. And when those high officials grow out of a union of Church and State and the individual units have no voice in the selection or removal of them it is no wonder that the Church becomes the poisoned honey on the breath of a terrible autocracy.

Lack of Organization.

Lack of organization or a plethora of disorganization precludes discipline. Organization is for the purpose of using all the inherent parts of any unit in the most efficacious and productive

manner, while preserving the essential spirit of the unified whole. The Church is either unorganized or disorganized by a maximum of segmentary organizations that have no organic relation to the whole. This accounts for much of its loss of power and discipline.

Untrained Leaders.

Failure to raise up a body of trained leaders out of the unit is to produce an undisciplined mob. A disciplined unit can only be produced by a trained lay leadership secured by adequate nurture and culture from among the whole and then set to the task of propagating the essential elements of their discipline among all the body. The less distance and the more competency there is among all the elements in the democracy the better will be the discipline in the Church.

Failure of Authority from Fear of Criticism.

Finally in this connection it is necessary to mention that an absence of authority to proclaim and enforce adequate standards will destroy discipline and produce the destruction of the democracy. Fear of criticism on the part of leaders is often at the bottom of this factor. Fear of criticism on the part of leaders is a con-

fession of failure and weakness. For years the Christian democracy has been halted because of it. For instance, fear of criticism has made them afraid to spend adequate sums of money in order to produce a corresponding increase in resources. A great missionary leader has just put this destructive spirit to flight in the Methodist Church and at the same time a Baptist layman attacked a similar evil spirit in his communion. The Lord raise up many more such leaders! Fear of criticism has caused a multitude of church officers to fail in the ordinary regulation of the surrendered individuals until now it is almost the exception rather than the rule for a church member to consider he has any obligation to conform to the simple fundamental requirements concerning worship, service or giving. In consequence discipline is destroyed and therefore the Christian democracy often looks like a group of self-regulated autocrats.

What Will Create Discipline?

Now consider what are the elements needed to create a sense of discipline.

Nurture and Culture.

Nurture first of all: and proper nurture even precedes birth. Then should follow an adequate

education that gives both mental discipline and moral and spiritual values so as to produce culture. Not Kultur! That is mental, but lacks soul and interdependence. There is a culture that is not culture but is cult. We must never forget that there can be no real culture apart from God and spirituality. That culture inevitably produces discipline and makes democracy safe anywhere in the world.

Adequate Leadership.

These twin needs for nurture and culture will of course necessitate adequate professional but brotherly democratic leadership as well as a large amount of trained lay leadership properly utilized, in adequate processes touching every department of the Christian democracy in a unified plan.

Education and Oversight.

The checking of delinquency must be attended to, but of more importance is the prevention of delinquency by proper teaching at the proper time. Democracy recognizes a difference between essentials and non-essentials. For instance, in America to-day you can dye your hair or rouge your face if you are foolish enough to do so, but you cannot use any mor-

phine. Preventing the use of the last named drug is essential to public welfare and private good, while the freedom to use the dye or rouge is a matter non-essential to all but good taste. Oversight is very essential to good discipline. What is everybody's business is nobody's. Those charged with the oversight must be closely answerable to their constituency. Nor must it be forgotten that the standards of the officary soon become the standards of the whole body. It has often been said that a good, well loved pastor can do what he wants with his membership; but whether or not that is altogether true I know that a poorly chosen, covetous, lazy board of deacons can speedily destroy all sense of discipline in any Christian democracy. So to create and preserve discipline, let me repeat, we must have proper oversight by trained lay and professional leaders.

A World Task.

A world task produces a fine sense of discipline. The largeness of Christ's objective is a tremendous spur to any well-nurtured soul and develops in their soul and mind a species of world culture that is enlarging and ennobling as well as giving a spirit of heroic venture to all the plans of the life. Is the missionary principle as

set forth in the Bible one that is left to the volition of the individual? Or is it mandatory? If mandatory and essential should it not be fundamental in the teaching, planning and projection of the Church? Should it not be absolutely divorced from all idea of money raising? The cause is love to God, the effect is obedience to God's world aims, hence the production of money as one of the necessary effects. A Christian democracy that is not intensely interested in producing other similar democracies when needed has failed to catch the true spirit of Christ and deserves to perish. This enterprise of the Church when properly laid on the hearts of each individual produces a disciplined life by the very breadth of its vision, which calls even for heroic giving and service in order to attain to its objective.

Submission to God.

Last but not least is this connection. Let us note the urgent need of an adequate submission by each individual to the God and Father of us all.

PRAYER

Nothing will produce a disciplined life without proper standards of a prayer life. It is the key

to every other surrender which the life has to make. Without it all others will not avail much. With it put into the first place all other elements in a life properly disciplined will be seen to owe their power to prayer being first. Prayer has three great phases. Communion, where one lets God talk to him. Petition, where the soul talks with God, and then intercession where the soul seeks God for the blessing and saving of others. Prayer is a divine principle and must become a human practice in a well-disciplined life. Divine principles never change, only they find new and varied expression in a changing world. To make the Christian democracy ideal we must first of all have individual units who submit themselves to God and then to their fellow believers in God's name for all His purposes.

SERVICE IN HIS NAME

The tasks of democracy are quite essential to its well-being and safety. All the tasks can be put into two phases. Producing a set of disciplined units in order to give to all peoples the Word of God and the spirit of Christ. This is to be done by self-sacrifice and self-elimination that the whole world may share equally with you your blessings, privileges and duties.

Products of Discipline.

Now we need in closing to show the products of discipline. They will be both democratic and individual. The former because of the latter. The latter will be the result of the former. Briefly these products of discipline can be summed up as follows :

A Spiritual Church.—The membership worshipping God and at prayer securing power and unity.

A Serving Church.—A church at work with God using the power to impress its unity upon a world of individuals lost, alone, yes sheep without a sheepfold or shepherd. But they will provide in God's name a fold by first producing the Shepherd.

A Sacrificing Church.—A church made up of God's partners, victorious in spirit, sacrificing in all their worship and service, therefore ready for the coming of the King, hence ready for whatever comes.

SHOWING THE WORLD THE VALUE OF DEMOCRACY

These products of Christian discipline will help the Christian democracy to show its ideal nature to the world and then the world will see in the Church a pattern for democracy and in

the search for democracy many will find Christ. The hope for world democracy rests in the unifying power of Christ's love and in Christian brotherhood, produced by fatherhood in God, and resulting in loving service.

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